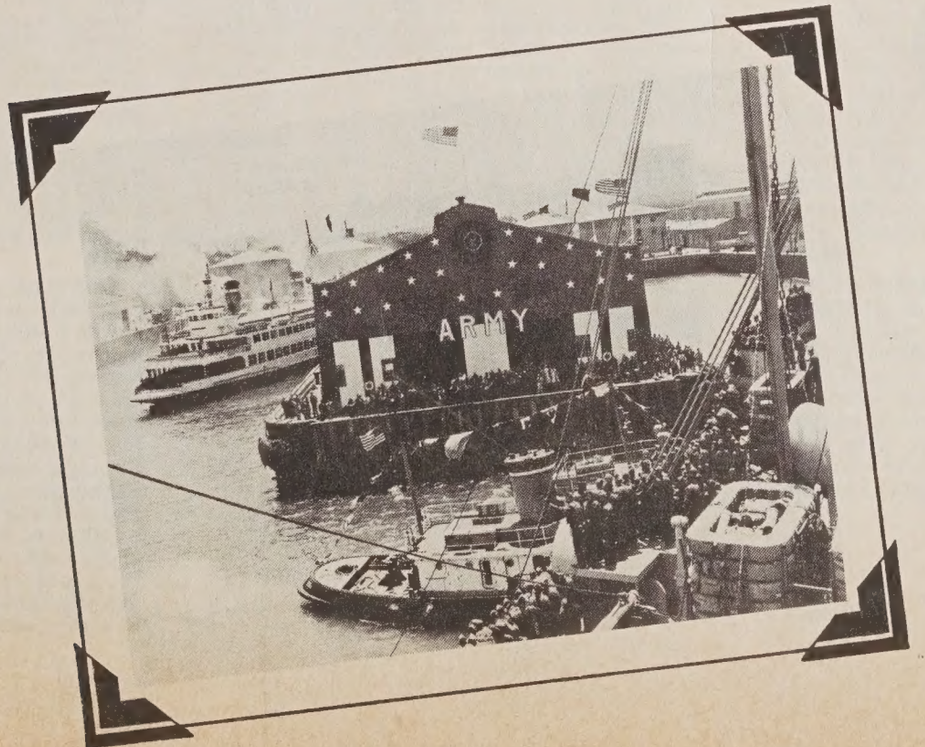
FORT MASON NEWSLETTER

78

Summer 1978

A Fort For All Seasons: (above) theatrical performance inside Fort Mason's Pier II during the 1978 Lively Arts Fair, where twenty-five years before (below) Army brass and brass bands welcomed the troops home from Korea.



Director's Report

Fort Mason Newsletter
Volume 1 Number 1

A publication of the
Fort Mason Foundation

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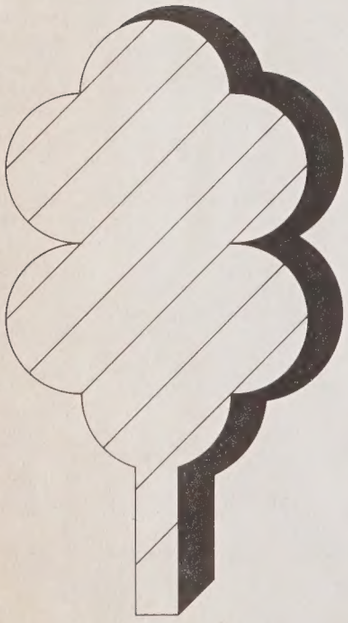


This initial newsletter signals a coming-of-age for the Fort Mason Foundation. It coincides with the beginning of a renegotiation of the Cooperative Agreement between the National Park Service and the Foundation, which will alter from an interim to a long-term basis the unique partnership between a nonprofit, community-representative organization and the federal government which has resulted in Fort Mason Center.

Since our program began in January 1977, over 170,000 persons have attended activities and events presented by the Foundation in the warehouses and piers at Fort Mason, the former army embarkation port on San Francisco's waterfront which is now headquarters for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Plays, concerts, fairs, festivals, workshops, classes, exhibitions—all these are transforming the historic old buildings into a vigorous new cultural, recreational and educational center.

The Secretary of Interior has hailed our program at Fort Mason as a national model for conversion of surplus government structures to new public benefit. A recent full-page magazine article described us as the "Bay Area's fastest growing cultural command-post". And soon we will be the subject of reports on European as well as local television—and featured in a *National Geographic* spread on National Parks.

Every day at Fort Mason brings exciting new possibilities for our programming. This summer we look forward to the start of our special concert series for seniors, to the new residency of a public radio production studio and to another big and successful Pacific States Crafts Fair. A recent $100,000 grant for renovation from the Hewlett Foundation is the key to a new phase of our growth, as we install a dance facility, music auditorium and art gallery in addition to existing performance and work spaces in the buildings administered through our Cooperative Agreement.

Fort Mason is located at one of the most beautiful remaining open sections of the San Francisco shoreline. It is a place to inspire hopes and dreams of what can be accomplished there for the benefit of everyone—but especially for city residents for whom such a unique urban National Park has been created. At a time when ever-increasing emphasis is placed on the quality of life in our cities, Fort Mason Center can be a showcase for the best that the Bay Area has to offer. The work of the Fort Mason Foundation is an exciting challenge and a rich opportunity—and we invite you, the reader of our first newsletter, to join us in making the hopes and dreams come true.

Ann Howell

A Fort For All Seasons

In those days, before landfill, it really was a *point*—one of the peninsula's stubby fingers poking into San Francisco Bay not four miles from the Golden Gate.

Indians roamed it. Costanoans (Spanish for "coast people") and Ahmuntac, Chuchi, Siscastac, Sitlintalac: hunting and gathering folk without agriculture, they took fish and shellfish from the sea, small game from the folded hills and washes, collected acorns, wild seeds, roots, berries.

And they thought this land the edge of the world, with nothing beyond the water to the west but the islands of the dead. They had poetry and music and dance and tule-reed boats; if they had a name for this tiny point, it has not come down to us.

The Spanish called it Punta Medanos—Sand Hill Point.

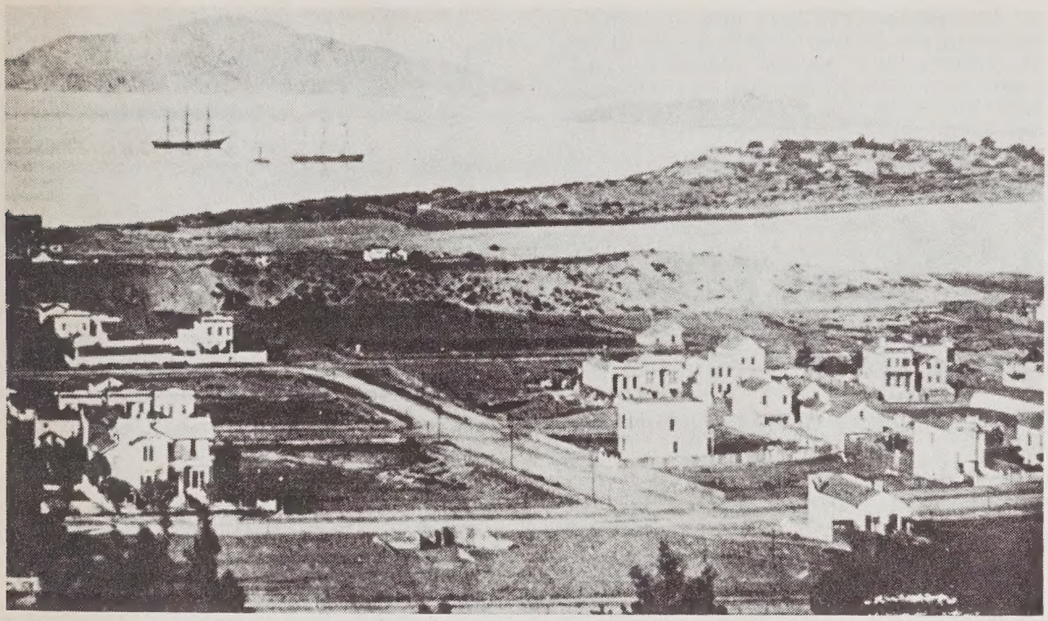
In the Spring of 1797, Governor Diego de Borcia, uneasy at the thought of predatory English and Russian Privateers, dispatched his engineer Alberto de Cordoba to Punta Medanos along with six brass cannon and a handful of soldiers and instructions to "further impede the anchorage of any hostile vessel in La Yerba Buena". The emplacement was named Bateria San Jose. The soldiers had "not even a hut to live in"; the cannon had a long, shallow trench. By 1806, the soldiers were gone—back to the Presidio—and the cannon were gone to the sand and the chill salt air. All that was left was another name: Punta San Jose.

The 'Forty-Niners called it Black Point, after the thick dark laurel and scrub oak that contended with the wind and fog for dominance. In November 1850, President Millard Fillmore formally reserved Black Point for military purposes, but with the trickle of gold from the Sierra foothills growing to a flood, and the population of San Francisco expanding in a geometric manner, niceties of law and order were seldom observed.

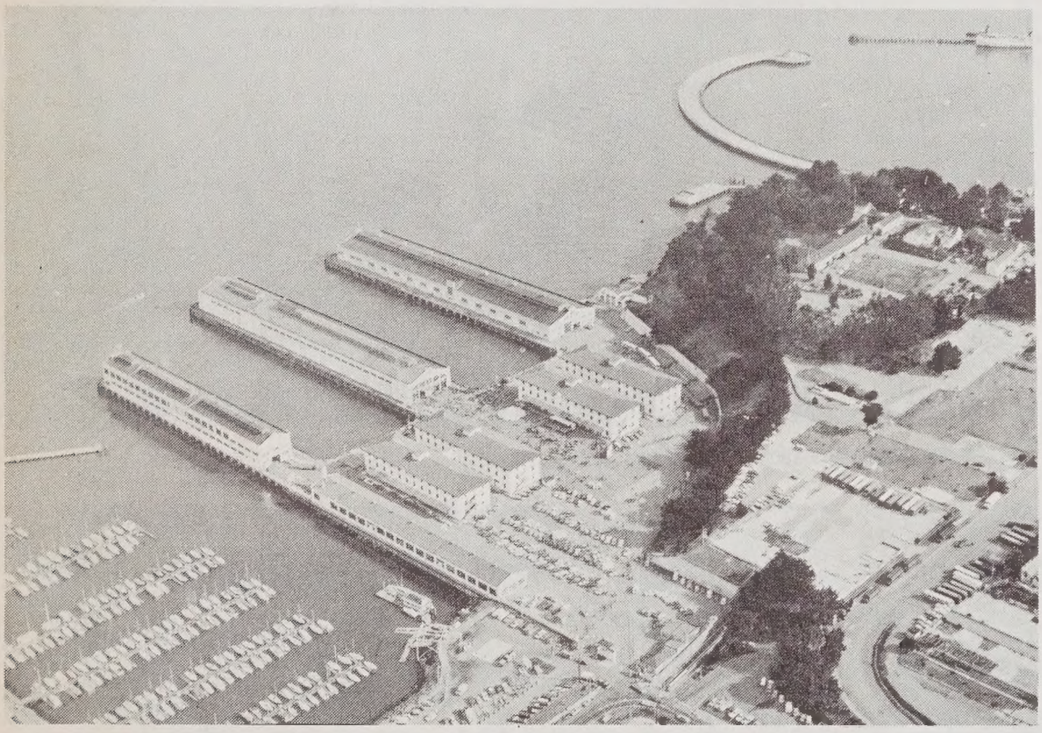
Squatters moved in—among them John C. Fremont. They occupied the land, fenced it off into parcels, built houses and shops and stables, planted flowers and shrubs, laid out streets and even paid taxes to the city. The Army in California at that time was small and weak and without means of preventing such usurpations of the public domain. "They have seized on the Point," reported a chagrined and depressed officer of artillery," . . . and have it in complete possession."

A dozen years later the situation had changed. The States were at war with each other, bringing fame of the most grisly sort to Vicksburg, Gettysburg and Chattanooga. San Francisco was a-boil with Secessionist plots.

One such contrivance involved a group of Southern sympathizers who called themselves Knights of the Golden Circle. Operating mostly out of blow-me-down saloons on Kearny Street, the Knights planned to raise an army, seize the forts around San Francisco Bay and eventually all of California for the Confederacy. When that scheme fell through, they attempted to bribe Albert Sidney Johnston, commandant of Fort Point and Alcatraz. Johnston declined—though a Southerner himself, he considered it his duty and a point of honor to remain loyal to the Union until his replacement arrived; when his replacement did arrive, Johnston went east to history and a hero's grave at Shiloh.



Black Point circa 1860



Fort Mason Center today

· More imaginative was Asbury Harpending, local character, speculator, swindler and con man of Brobdingnagian magnitude. Gaining Jefferson Davis' permission to outfit a privateer and harry loyal commerce up and down the Coast, Harpending bought a sailing vessel, the *Chapman,* loaded it with guns and co-conspirators and set out to capture a sidewheel steamer, which latter boat he planned to sail to Mexico where he would buy additional weaponry and then return to easy pickings off the mouth of San Francisco Bay.

Unfortunately for him, Harpending had neglected to calculate the effect of Demon Rum on beached sailors. The evening before the *Chapman* was scheduled to sail, the boat's skipper took himself out for a tipple on the Barbary Coast and was deep in the bag, whereabouts unknown, when time came to hoist anchor the following day. Harpending and company cast off anyway and promptly ran aground. When the sun came all the way up they found themselves surrounded by Federal warships and shoo-in candidates for free room and board at the nearest stockade.

By the Fall of 1863, however, more credible danger was afoot. The Tsar, still landlord of Alaska, liked to amuse himself with the thought of expanding Russian America south, reasoning that one major war was all the United States could handle at a time. And England, with a bad cotton habit, always ready to put the boots to any up-and-coming world power, had long trembled on the verge of intervention in favor of the Confederacy. Nudging matters from bad to worse came the rebel steam frigate *Shenandoah,* loose in the north Pacific, savaging the whaling trade and moving south.

Without further ado, the Army reasserted its claim to Black Point with a vengeance. The squatters were driven out, trailing clouds of civil action; the structures they had built were either torn down or converted to military uses. Barracks and supply sheds were built, fortifications thrown up and an underground powder magazine constructed. Although events at Appomattox Courthouse soon rendered this flurry of martial activity academic, Black Point had finally become a fort in more than fancy. About the time Lee took back his sword and horse and went home, two batteries of rifled cannon were emplaced. One year later they were obsolete.

In 1882, the Black Point military reservation was renamed Fort Mason, after the first American military governor of California. By that time, it was no longer a point anyway, landfill having converted the equilaterally triangular inlet between it and the Presidio into several square blocks worth of real estate.

Theoretically an active Army post, Fort Mason lay doggo, sleepy and undermanned all through the '70s, '80s and early '90s. But in 1898, when the *Maine* went down, Fort Mason's military stock went up. With America having gained an empire, Fort Mason gained a new career supplying guns and grits and replacement parts to the soldiers and sailors on post around the edges of that empire.

(continued)

In 1906, several thousand earthquake-and-fire refugees and the San Francisco Quartermaster Depot were relocated to Fort Mason. In 1910 and 1911 the piers were constructed. Largely excluded from direct participation in World War I by reasons of geography, the fort was awarded a consolation prize in 1919 when it functioned as a staging area for the Allies' abortive attempt to revise the outcome of the Russian Revolution. All through the '20s and '30s, Fort Mason's pierslips were jammed with shipping of the famed Army Transport Service, its piersheds piled high with bales, crates and barrels bound for the Pacific.

World War II boosted Fort Mason to the apogee of its military importance. Between 1940 and 1945, it was the principal departure and arrival lounge for men and materiel moving to and from the Pacific Theater, feeding nearly 2,000,000 grunts and 23,000,000 tons of cargo into the deadly tedium of war.

After that, Korea was all anticlimax—a sort of five-finger exercise with two fingers out to lunch—and after Korea the military worth of Fort Mason entered on a steady decline, the angle of which grew steeper every year, attaining perpendicularity about the time John, Paul, George and Ringo were beginning to rearrange, in a beneficial way, Great Britain's balance of payments.

Finally, in 1962, the Department of Defense shifted all transport operations across the Bay to Oakland Army Terminal. Early in 1963, the last military vessel to depart Fort Mason left from Pier II; bound for Southeast Asia, the boat carried the goods and persons of dependents of American military advisors in Vietnam. In July of that year, the westernmost 44 acres—lower Fort Mason—were declared excess and turned over to the General Services Administration, which promptly leased the piers and some of the warehouse buildings to other government agencies and to private enterprise. Only family housing, the Officer's and Noncommissioned Officer's Clubs were retained by the Army. After 100 years of active service, Fort Mason retired. There was no pension.

Tom Kent

Earthquake refugees camping out at Fort Mason, 1906

Fort Mason piers under construction, 1910

Pier II in the 1920s: "bales, crates and barrels bound for the Pacific"

Invitation To The Dance

The footprints are on the wall.

Call it Saturday night fever, call it Sunday morning shivers, call it what you will: dance is booming, and, as both a recreational and a health-enhancing activity, it now bids fair to challenge tennis and jogging in the Most Popular Sweepstakes. At Fort Mason Center this phenomenon is acknowledged with a range of dance instruction generous enough to accommodate virtually anyone's expectations.

There's **Jazz Dance,** for example, a genre only somewhat less varied and elusive than its musical namesake. Both to the pure amateur in it strictly for the exercise, and to the true neophyte with professional ambitions, classes at the Center teach the elements of composition plus all the basic steps, stretches, combinations and routines. Students bring their own rhythm.

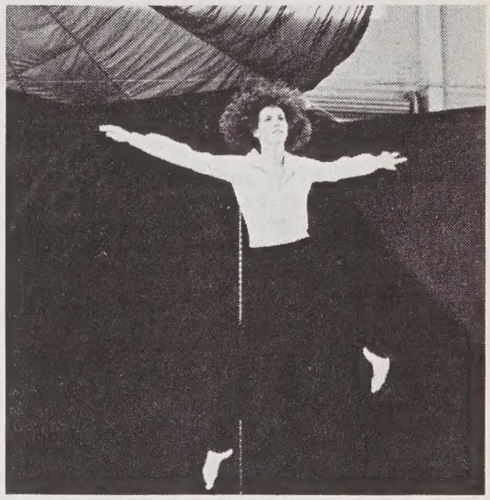
For those, on the other hand (foot?), interested in social dancing and who consider same more romantic than acrobatic, YMCA **Ballroom Dance** instructors are available at Fort Mason Center to unravel and demonstrate the mysteries of the fox trot, the waltz and the rhumba. No less mysterious but a good deal more strenuous is 1950s **Jitterbug,** one of this season's prime *objet d'nostalgia.* Students learn the "Groucho"! they learn the "Pretzel"! . . . and some of these students may even come back to learn what happened when jitterbug colluded with the blow-dryer and the 12-minute, three-chord chorus, loosing **Disco** on the world . . . the "Body Language" and the "Latin Hustle", that's what happened! Students bring their own splints.

Although what can only be described as the Great Tap Dance Revival may not quite yet have entered history (the back door is locked?), Fort Mason Center offers more than enough instruction in the art to at least buy it a footnote: four different **Tap Dance** classes taught by four different teachers, one class gilded with the double-barreled title, "Tap For Health". Students bring their own skimmers and canes . . .

But the dance boom is manifesting itself in the world of dance-as-art as well as the world of dance-as-recreation, with serious dancers, dance companies and dance enthusiasts proliferating around the Bay Area at a rate comparable to the eruption of mushrooms after a stiff spring rain. Unfortunately, this upsurge of activity, interest and esteem has not been accompanied by a commensurate increase in space suitable for dance, resulting in a shortfall that is both serious and frustrating; fortunately, some relief is on the way.

Scheduled for the coming year is the creation of a dance performance space at Fort Mason Center. Current plans are to install this new performance space in a loft in one of the Center's renovated warehouse buildings and, upon its completion, inaugurate the facility with a regional Dance Festival. A multi-purpose conference/performance area planned for construction in a single-story building directly next to Gashouse Cove at the Center will also be available for dance performances and rehearsals.

More immediate is the establishment of the San Francisco Bay Area Dance Coalition as a resident at Fort Mason Center. A service/resource organization, the Coalition has a current membership composed of 53 dance companies and 500 individuals; it publishes a comprehensive monthly calendar of dance activity in the Bay Area; maintains a resource file of spaces available for dance classes, rehearsals and performances plus general information of interest to the dance community; and sponsors and produces dance series allowing a number of companies and individual dancers working in a wide variety of styles the generally rare luxury of performing in an adequate facility and with a good technical crew.



Dancer Karen Attix performing at Fort Mason

The presence of the San Francisco Bay Area Dance Coalition at Fort Mason Center significantly broadens and deepens the Center's contact and involvement with the local dance community. This new, more extensive involvement, taken with the Center's upcoming acquisition of a dance performance capability, will finally plug what has been a major hole in the Center's program in the performing arts.

Coming Aboard

The Fort Mason Foundation is pleased to announce the election of three new members to its Board of Directors: **Carlota Texidor del Portillo, Naomi T. Gray** and **Brooks, Walker, Jr.**

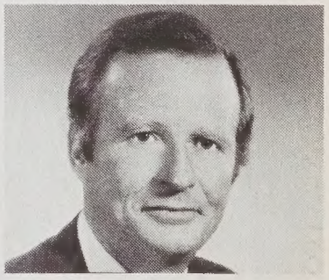
These welcome additions to the Board return it to its full membership of twenty-four. They demonstrate the Foundation's commitment to maintaining a Board of Directors that is ethnically, geographically and culturally representative of the Bay Area —including members with interest and skills in the arts, humanities, recreation, education and ecology.

Carlota Texidor del Portillo

Carlota Texidor del Portillo is Assistant Director of Mission Community College Occupational Center, San Francisco. Born in Puerto Rico, she received a B.A. degree in Spanish and Anthropology from Hunter College, an M.A. degree in Counseling from the University of San Francisco. She is a former Director of the San Francisco YWCA and currently serves on the Board of Directors of Catholic Social Services, on the Corporate Board of Catholic Charities, Inc., and as a Trustee of the San Francisco Mental Health Association.

Naomi T. Gray

Naomi T. Gray has been active in the fields of social and health planning for over twenty years, both in the United States and abroad. A graduate of Hampton Institute with a B.S. degree in Sociology and the University of Indiana with an M.A. degree in Social Services, she is President of Naomi Gray Associates, Founder and Past President of Educational Access Cable Television Corporation of San Francisco, a Director of First Women's Savings and Loan Association, and President of New Directions in Community Services, Inc.



Brooks Walker, Jr.

Brooks Walker, Jr. is Chairman of the Board of United States Leasing International, Inc., and a Director of Bank of California and of Systems Development Corporation. Born in Oakland, California, he graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, with a B.A. degree and from Harvard University with an M.B.A. degree in Finance. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the San Francisco Civic Light Opera Association, Planned Parenthood, the San Francisco Bay Area Council, Smith-Kettlewell Eye Research Foundation and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

New Superintendent At GGNRA

"I expect to be around for a long time"—with those words, Lynn H. Thompson took over as General Superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in April, succeeding William J. Whalen, who left in June 1977 to become Director of the National Park Service.

At the time of his appointment, Thompson, 52, was serving as director of the Park Service's Rocky Mountain Region, a position he held since the Region was organized in January 1974, and in which capacity he oversaw the operation of National Parks in North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Utah.

Lynn H. Thompson

A native of Salt Lake City and a Navy veteran of World War II, Thompson began his Park Service career in 1957 as a seasonal employee in Yellowstone National Park. In 1963, he became a park ranger and went on to serve as a concessions analyst at Park Service headquarters in Washington (1967); as a management assistant at Yosemite National Park (1968); and as superintendent of Haleakala National Park, Maui, Hawaii (1969).

Thompson was an assistant in the Park Service's Office of Legislation from late 1970 until becoming superintendent of Yosemite National Park in July 1971, where he served until his appointment to the Rocky Mountain post.

Send A Message To MUNI

In February of this year, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus delivered a bulky report to Congress assessing the recreational needs of urban America. Among other things, the report found that although the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area is "perhaps unmatched by any other major metropolitan area" in quantity of parks and parklands available, most city residents can't get to those parks because of lack of public transit.

Take Fort Mason Center, for example. Located at the very gateway to the 35,000-acre Golden Gate National Recreation Area, blessed with breathtaking views of the Bay and surrounding hills, the Center is alive every day with plays, concerts, poetry readings, art shows, classes, workshops, fairs, festivals and more—all offered to the public at minimal or moderate cost.

And yet, valuable resource though it clearly is, Fort Mason Center is without direct transit service. The nearest bus stop is three long blocks away, across two major traffic arteries—quite a hike for young children, senior citizens and the handicapped under the best conditions; quite a hike for anyone if the weather's bad.

The Fort Mason Foundation is out to change that situation. We're mounting a campaign to convince San Francisco Municipal Railway officials, the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor — anyone who needs convincing—that not only is it desirable to establish direct transit service to Fort Mason Center, it's necessary.

You can help. Write to MUNI, write to the Mayor, write to the Board of Supervisors. Demand direct transit service to Fort Mason Center. If you'd rather, write to the Fort Mason Foundation asking that transit service be established to the Center—we'll see that your views are passed along to the proper people.

Your help is essential if Fort Mason Center is to be made easily available to everyone. Send a message to MUNI!

Performing Arts For Seniors At The Center

Thanks to a grant from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, a project which had long been a gleam in the Fort Mason Foundation's collective eye finally came to fruition July 9 in the form of "A Musical Banquet", the first in a series of performing arts events for senior citizens at Fort Mason Center. Featured in the inaugural performance were noted harpsichordist Laurette Goldberg and mezzo-soprano Dorothy Barnhouse, with wine and cheese served prior to the concert.

Other events planned for the series include a Dixieland Jazz concert, a tea dance, a vaudeville show and the opening celebration for a senior citizens' art exhibit in the Marina View Gallery at Fort Mason Center. With the assistance of the San Francisco Mayor's Commission on the Aging and Canon Kip Community House, the Fort Mason Foundation will provide free transportation to each event for seniors who otherwise would be unable to attend.

Given its programming function in one of the nation's first urban National Parks, the Fort Mason Foundation feels a special committment to those citizens, such as seniors, who tend to be confined to cities and thus denied National Park-type experiences. This upcoming performing arts series, offering high-quality entertainment in congenial settings on the San Francisco waterfront, is merely a first step toward honoring that committment.

A Fourth of July tradition: Pickle Family Circus at Fort Mason

The Greening of Fort Mason

Fresh-baked bread and a view of the Golden Gate are features of Fort Mason Center's first restaurant to be open by Thanksgiving. A juice bar, soups, salads, sandwiches, omelettes and pastas, topped off by assorted exotic pastries, will be provided by the San Francisco Zen Center, well known for its culinary art. Park visitors will be able to enjoy delicious recipes that, until now, it's been necessary to travel to one of the Zen monasteries at Tassajara near Big Sur or to Green Gulch Ranch near Muir Beach to sample—except, of course, for the popular Zen Center bakery in San Francisco.

"Greens", as the restaurant is to be known—because of its proximity to the Marina Green and its salad specialties—fills a definite need for a food service to accommodate the rising number of visitors to Fort Mason. Persons attending the many plays, concerts, fairs, exhibitions and classes will be able to order *á la carte* items both day and night—with free parking just a few feet away and a spectacular shoreline panorama visible through the windows of Building 308, just inside the Laguna & Marina gate, where the restaurant will be located.

Here Today . . . Here Tomorrow

There is a four-foot by three-foot blackboard standing on three legs in the lobby of Fort Mason Center. Every morning, a Fort Mason Foundation staff member goes down there and, copy of the monthly events calendar in hand, lists on the blackboard everything going on at the Center on that particular day. The list is always substantial; not uncommonly, the list threatens to overrun the limits of the board itself and begins to resemble a primitive form of optometrist's chart, with the letters growing smaller as the eye descends . . .

The point: there's lots going on here every day—plays, concerts, classes, seminars, art shows, fairs, festivals, *ad*-more-or-less-*infinitum*. And that's all very well and good. Something for everyone, as the snake oil salesman said. But in the shadow of that plenitude there is also cause for worry: such profusion can all too easily become an end in itself, the Center could devolve into a sort of crazy quilt of activities, a hodgepodge of mostly ephemeral events, here today, gone tomorrow.

That, of course, is not the point. Fort Mason Center was never intended as a cultural motel, with the Foundation's role limited to that of passive innkeeper overseeing an endless succession of one-night stands. As a stabilizing and balancing element, we've invited groups and organizations active in each of the Foundation's programmatic areas (arts, humanities, recreation, education and ecology) to become residents at Fort Mason Center on a full-time, day-to-day basis for terms of from one to three years, adding depth and continuity to the Center's broad array of short-term programs and activities.

During the first six months the Center was in operation, dozens of potential residents were interviewed and evaluated to determine which ones would best further Fort Mason Center's goals, and which ones would best utilize the available space. Last July, the first such groups selected began moving in; as 1978 progresses, more will follow. In future issues of this newsletter, various of these resident groups will be profiled, but this time out, space limitations prohibit more than a long list and brief descriptions.

Asian Holistic Health Center/Integral Chuan Institute. Asian Holistic Health Center offers classes, workshops and demonstrations regarding traditional Asian health practices; Integral Chuan Institute teaches T'ai Chi, emphasizing health and self-development; both have special programs for the elderly and the handicapped.

Blue Bear School of Music. An alternative education music school providing classes, workshops, recitals and individual instruction in all genres of popular music. Blue Bear will also share space with teachers and performers from other musical backgrounds so that, eventually, as broad a range of music will be offered as can be physically accommodated in the facilities.

Center for World Music presents unique and highly-acclaimed concerts of Indian, Balinese and Javanese music and dance, plus many other ethnic and classical musical styles. A wide range of classes is also offered.

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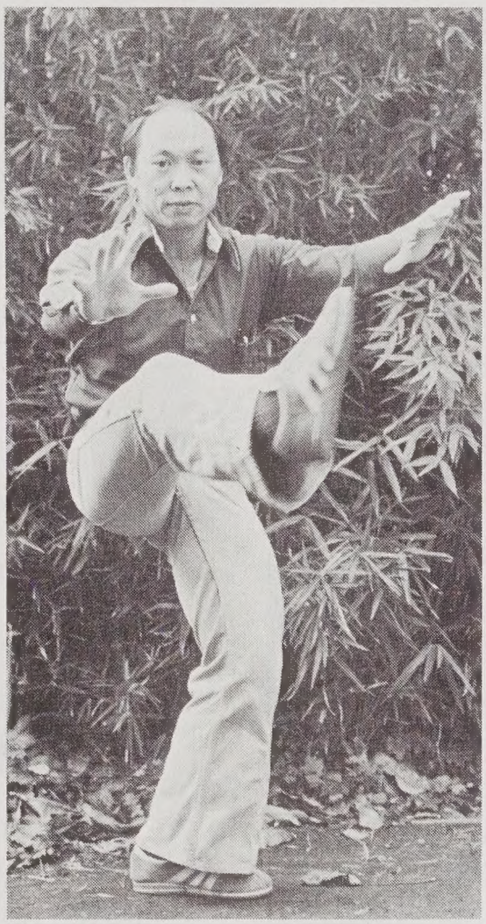
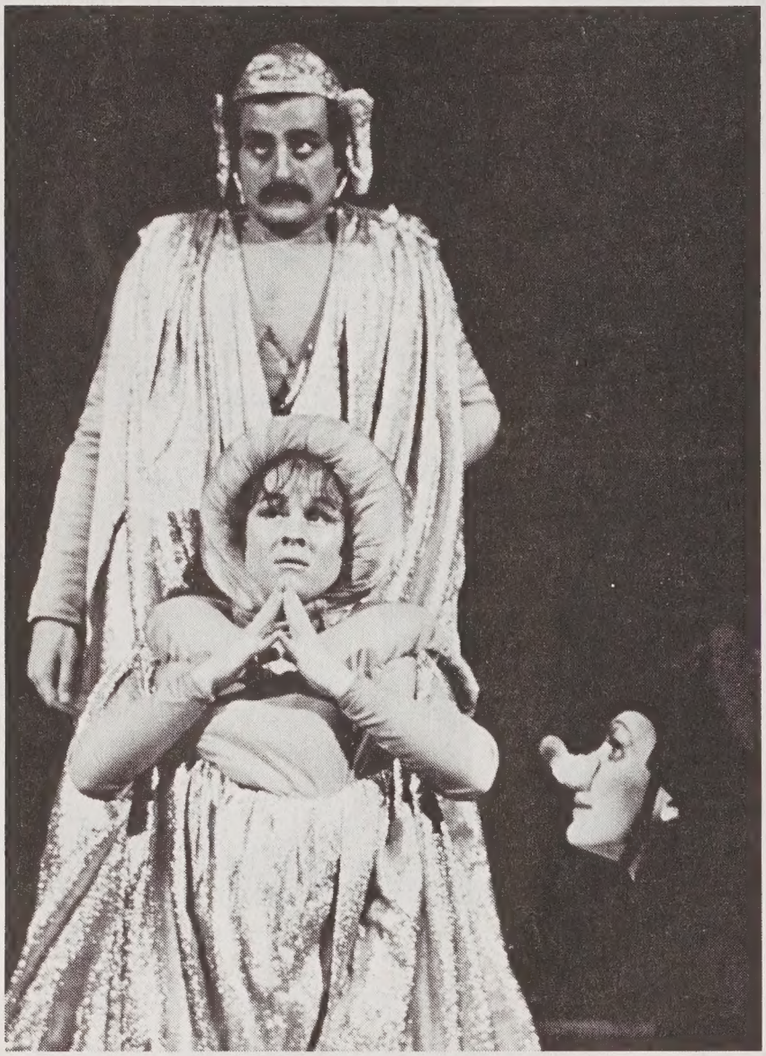


T'ai Chi demonstration by Chuan Institute founder Fong Ha

Dancer from Sri Lanka at Center for World Music

Impromptu jam session at Blue Bear



Magic Theatre's *Minnie Mouse and the Tap-Dancing Buddha*

Minor artists at the Children's Art Center

YMCA Ballroom Dance class at Fort Mason Center

Ensemble of Stanislavski Theater Artists teaches classes in Stanislavski method acting, movement, voice, improvisation and make-up.

Farallones Institute, a new resident, will offer a series of workshops, film showings and educational programs on its investigations in the field of energy- and resource-conserving, human-scale technology.

Friends of the Library will present exhibits of rare books, story reading hours for children, the Annual Big Book Sale, smaller book sales and a number of educational programs at Fort Mason Center.

Greenpeace, the well-known conservation organization, maintains a public drop-in center and presents weekly lectures and slide shows concerning the plight of marine mammals, especially whales and harp seals.

Inner City Outings, a branch of the Sierra Club, teaches outdoor adventure skills to community leaders and organizes trips for disadvantaged inner city youths.

Magic Theatre, during its ten years of existence, has become one of the most critically-acclaimed experimental theater companies in the nation. At Fort Mason Center, Magic Theatre presents a regular series of contemporary, often world-premiere plays, plus classes in performance and technical skills.

Meristem, another new resident, will teach Aikido to new students, and it will offer daily demonstrations in this non-violent martial art to park visitors.

San Francisco Central YMCA will offer a typically broad range of recreational and educational programs, from ballroom dancing to skiing fitness, travel lectures to clown classes, at Fort Mason.

San Francisco Children's Art Center offers specially individualized instruction to children between the ages of 3 and 12 years with seven or eight classes per week.

San Francisco Folk Music Center conducts its Plowshares Coffeehouse Concert Series as a regular Sunday evening event at Fort Mason and from its new office here will carry on folk research and organize such events as the recent Free Folk Festival.

(continued)

Peter Kessler performing for the San Francisco Folk Music Center

Like these jugglers and acrobats at the Lively Arts Fair, two dozen resident groups at Fort Mason Center work together to create and sustain a balanced program of activities for our diverse audience of Bay Area residents and visitors.

Closely related to the concept of residency is another key component of the Foundation's program at Fort Mason—the resource center, a place where resident and non-resident groups can complement their activities, equipment and skills in a public service program that both serves the park visitor and extends its impact into the surrounding community. At the Media Resource Center, for example, **Artists In Print, Media Alliance, Media Interchange** and other professional communicators offer classes and workshops in all phases of graphic and print media, with special emphasis on providing media skills and access to community and arts organizations. In the year ahead, the Media Resource Center will be expanded to include a film and video section.

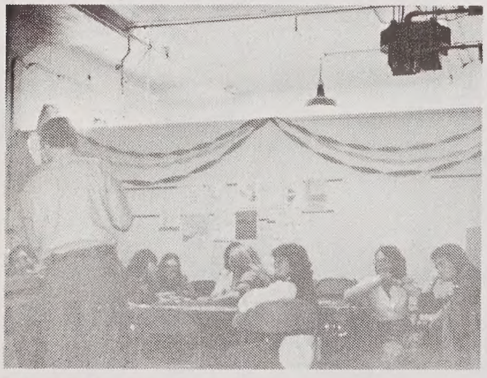
The Environmental Resource Center is a cooperative grouping of several Bay Area organizations working to effect increased public awareness and understanding of environmental issues. A $26,370 grant from the Junior League of San Francisco is being used to add an "Environmental Action Clearinghouse" to this resource center. The goal of the clearinghouse is to help the average park visitor, as well as the dedicated activist, find and utilize information on environmental issues and so be able to play a responsible and effective role in matters of ecological concern.

This dimension of community service added to Fort Mason Center by the resource centers is being further expanded by the new residencies of **Hospital Audiences,** which arranges performing arts programs in hospitals, prisons and other institutional settings; **Peace and Pieces Multi-Cultural Center,** a resource center for writers and poets; and **San Francisco Bay Area Dance Coalition,** which publishes a monthly calendar of dance activity in the Bay Area and maintains a library of information of interest to dancers and dance enthusiasts.

It is important to understand that the process of inviting residents and creating resource centers is continuous and dynamic, subject to and conditioned by the perceived needs and fluctuating resources of the groups themselves. Fort Mason Center will grow and change as the people it serves grow and change. The end is not in sight.

Appreciative spectator at a Hospital Audiences program

General Whale's "Pheena": Life-size replica of an adolescent fin whale "born" at Fort Mason, now residing next to Pier II as a symbol of the Center's ecology programming.



"Graphics for Non-Artists" workshop at the Media Resource Center

A Tale Of Two Hats

It's a tale of two hats—the role of Fort Mason Center within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

On the one hand (head?), Fort Mason Center functions as a unique resource for residents of the San Francisco Bay Area, providing a virtually unending stream of cultural, recreational and educational programs and activities; on the other hand, the Center is now beginning to operate as an especially persuasive "people magnet", drawing increasing numbers of the approximately 5,000,000 annual national and international visitors to San Francisco into this magnificent new National Park straddling the Golden Gate.

During the first year of its existence, the "people magnet" function of Fort Mason Center was largely a by-product of the Center's task of establishing itself and laying down a solid base of programming from which to proceed. Now that the Center is established, and that solid base of programming is in place, the Center is actively reaching out to better serve the ever-swelling cavalcade of national and international visitors to everybody's second city.

Already in the process of creation is a visitor's center for the pier area. Located in Building 308, that structure closest to Fort Mason Center's entrance gate, the visitor's center will offer ground level access convenient to children, senior and handicapped citizens, and sweeping views of the Golden Gate and the Marin headlands. An audio/visual presentation inside the visitor's center will provide an overview of Fort Mason Center, while a board display will describe all the "drop in" activities available to the park visitor, along with a list of major coming events. Around the walls and in display cases, a panorama of photographs and memorabilia will trace the colorful and turbulent history of Fort Mason from its sequestering as a military reservation in 1850 to the present. Also available will be the entire range of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and National Park Service brochures and pamphlets, plus a map showing Fort Mason's location in relation to other recreational possibilities in the park and indicating miles (or kilometers) and minutes of travel.

After planting and grading, an outdoor amphitheater only a few hundred feet from San Francisco Bay.

Adjacent to the visitor's center will be the Fort Mason Foundation offices and—in the building's north end, abutting on the Bay—a restaurant offering fine, moderately-priced lunches, light dinners and take-out items. The south end of Building 308 is scheduled to become a conference and performing arts space for dance, films and musical events, featuring open rehearsals during the day—thus providing park visitors the rare opportunity of looking "behind the scenes".

A new and extensive system of exterior signage currently being developed by the Fort Mason Foundation and the National Park Service will make Fort Mason Center more easily accessible to the park visitor unfamiliar with the area, and will work to tie the lower Fort more closely to the upper Fort, making all of Fort Mason a more clearly unified and attractive whole. Major elements in this new signage system are: a marquee at the entrance gate along with a pedestrian map showing all buildings in the pier area; an information kiosk centrally located in the Center's parking lot; a large wall map of the pier area outside the visitor's center; more visible building numbers and more visible entrance signs on all buildings, and a large sign at the Franklin Street entrance indicating the location of Fort Mason Center.

Also aimed at tying upper and lower Fort Mason more closely together, "demilitarizing" the entire Fort and making it more attractive to visitors is the Park Service's plan for landscaping this old warhorse out of the Army and into the leisure industry's nonprofit division. That portion of the plan dealing with upper Fort Mason has been well-publicized already and need not be repeated here; that portion dealing with lower Fort Mason will, when implemented, soften the entire area through grading and planting, while retaining sufficient parking and enhancing the sense of scale and grand sweep available in no other part of the Fort. The steep natural slope from the upper to the lower Fort, for example, will be graded to create an amphitheater for outdoor performances just a few hundred feet from San Francisco Bay, and a careful program of planting will dot the pier area with viewing spots sheltered from the wind, combining the physical comforts of the city with the scenic resources of a wilderness area.

Only six years old, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is a fledgling as far as National Parks go. Thanks in large part to the popularity of the Fort Mason Foundation's program, Fort Mason, at the hub of the park, is becoming increasingly known as a place for people rather than military personnel. As that knowledge spreads and as the Fort takes on an increasingly park-like appearance, it will become gateway to this vast tract of beach, forest and mountain in reality as well as in name. Ferry service from Fort Mason to the rest of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is suggested in the National Park Service's overall master plan for the park; the eventual routing of vintage San Francisco streetcars through the tunnel beneath upper Fort Mason, connecting Fisherman's Wharf with the Golden Gate Bridge. San Francisco and the Bay Area, with their legions of annual visitors will, in this design, be linked through the nexus of Fort Mason to the entire Golden Gate National Recreation Area—a model urban National Park for one of the most highly urbanized metropolitan areas in the nation.

Holding The Fort

Despite the fact it is part of a National Park, Fort Mason Center receives no direct financial support from the federal government. We've made this point before and will doubtless make it again . . . because it's important. According to the Cooperative Agreement between the National Park Service and the Fort Mason Foundation, the Park Service's obligations toward the Foundation are limited to the provision of in-kind services such as exterior maintenance of the buildings comprising Fort Mason Center and the outside grounds, security, parking and traffic control, trash removal and certain technical assistance. But money for interior renovation and maintenance, operating costs, administration and program development must all be gotten elsewhere.

Some of that money comes from use and admission fees, some of it from fundraising events, some of it from memberships and special gifts. But the lion's share so far has come from other government agencies, from corporations and, especially, from charitable foundations. During the two years of its existence, the Fort Mason Foundation has been generously supported by Bay Area philanthropies that recognize Fort Mason's great potential as a public resource—with every foundation that provided initial funding having expressed its confidence in the Fort Mason project by renewing grant support. Wary of false modesty, we can only attribute this to a general appreciation of our vision and strength of purpose.

What follows is a list, arranged alphabetically, of government agencies, corporations and foundations which have supported the work of the Fort Mason Foundation from its inception up until the time this newsletter goes to press:

California Arts Council
Citizens Savings and Loan Association
Clorox Company
Columbia Foundation
Foremost-McKesson Foundation
Gerbode Foundation
Rhoda & Richard Goldman Fund
Goldman Sachs Fund of the New York Community Trust
Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
Luke B. Hancock Foundation
William Randolph Hearst Foundation
William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
Junior League of San Francisco
Lakeside Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
David & Lucile Packard Foundation
City & County of San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund
San Francisco Foundation
United Airlines
van Löben Sels Foundation
Wells Fargo Bank
and the U.S. Dept. of Labor CETA Title VI Program through a contract with the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Employment & Training.

As this newsletter goes to press, we are pleased to announce that the Ford Foundation has awarded the Fort Mason Foundation a grant of $40,000 to be used for administrative support.

Handyman's Special

You can find them in the classified advertising section of any newspaper in the land, in the Real Estate columns under Homes for Sale. They always run true to form: a brief, non-specific description of the property, maybe a "nr. Transp." thrown in for good measure, and then the tagline, "Handyman's Special!"

Absolutely. "Handyman's Special!"—that delightful, oddly buoyant euphemism meaning—like all good slogans, horoscopes, political platforms and sales pitches — virtually all things to all men and nothing to any man. . . . Yet, "Handyman's Special!", in all its elusiveness, is a fair enough description of the piersheds and warehouses the Fort Mason Foundation assumed responsibility for in May 1976 when it moved into lower Fort Mason with the ink still wet on its Articles of Incorporation. Though basically sound, the buildings were in stages of disorder and disrepair ranging from Building 310, in which all basic systems were operative, to Building 314, which was little more than a concrete shell.

The work necessary—clean-up, repair and renovation—was not simply cosmetic or gratuitous; it was essential to the task at hand: transforming an abandoned and somnolent military facility into a regional center for the arts, humanities, recreation, education and ecology.

Now it's two years later. Though much remains to be done, much has been accomplished, and the tempo of repair and renovation increases daily. Eventually 300,000 square feet of building space will be made available for public use.

Building 308 is treated in a separate story.

Building 310 required hardly any work at all. The Foundation did install a 99-seat theater in a third floor loft—a much-needed theater, open to the community, that currently is booked solid every weekend for the next several months.

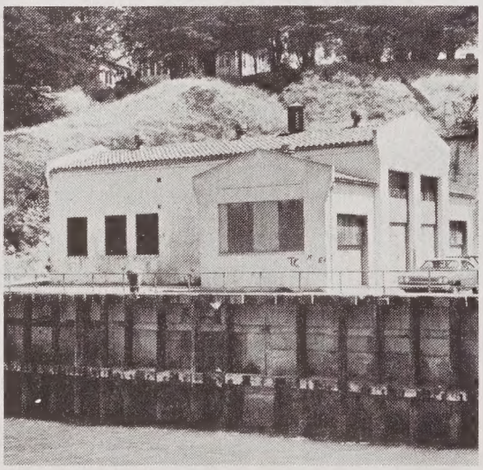
Jazz concert in a warehouse loft: Music replaces marching orders as the old fort embarks upon a new career

Building 312 was a basic, unreconstructed Army warehouse when the Fort Mason Foundation moved in. The Foundation installed a boiler, laid tile floors, repaired and upgraded bathroom facilities and the fire safety system, cleaned and painted and partitioned the space into workable units. Over a dozen resident groups are currently housed in Building 312, with ample space left over for rotating programs and activities.

When responsibility for **Building 314** shifted to the Fort Mason Foundation, the old structure was barely more than a concrete box harboring a wide range of graffiti and great piles of miscellaneous detritus. Since then, Magic Theatre built and has in constant use a 99-seat theater at the north end of the building's third floor. Elsewhere, the Foundation is cleaning, painting, partitioning, laying tile floors, installing a boiler and heating system and upgrading electrical, plumbing and fire safety systems. Construction of a Media Resource Center and a Music Center have just been completed on the building's second floor.

Building 315—with no heat, no gas line, minimal plumbing and no fire escapes—presently is used as a supply warehouse for the Young Adult Conservation Corps. It is the last of four identical, adjacent buildings to be renovated, at which time another 36,000 square feet of space will become available for public use.

Building 322, aka (romantically) "The Firehouse", is actually a former battery recharging station, long disused. Situated on the Bay looking toward Alcatraz, the structure is the trigger of many dreams, but requires complete interior renovation before being available for public use.



Building 322: "The Firehouse"

Pier II is in good shape, Used for large events such as the recent Lively Arts Fair and the upcoming Pacific States Crafts Fair, the 56,000 square-foot pier needs only expanded fire safety, electrical and plumbing facilities.

Pier III is not in good shape. Everything said above regarding Building 314 applies equally to Pier III. The structure needs a thorough clean-up, paint job, and adequate electrical, plumbing, heating and fire safety systems. When this work has been accomplished, a Marine Ecology Center will be developed in the pier. The Center will emphasize the ecology of San Francisco Bay and may include laboratories and other research facilities, with exhibits and workshops exploring marine ecological relationships and their underlying principles.

It is important to note that most of the renovation work being done by the Fort Mason Foundation is of the most basic sort —work necessary before the old piers and warehouses could be opened to anything but the most minimal public use. Where the work is more specific, a major design criterion is that the spaces be altered for a broad range of possible future uses.

Whenever possible, the Fort Mason Foundation has and will continue to utilize the services of the federally funded Young Adult Conservation Corps. The Corps provides its workers with employment and training in all levels of construction skills. It provides Fort Mason Center with both labor and building materials, thus allowing the renovation funds raised by the Foundation to be stretched beyond their ordinary dimensions —and making this unique and innovative project a genuine "Handyman's Special!"

Pier II draped in finery at the Lively Arts Fair

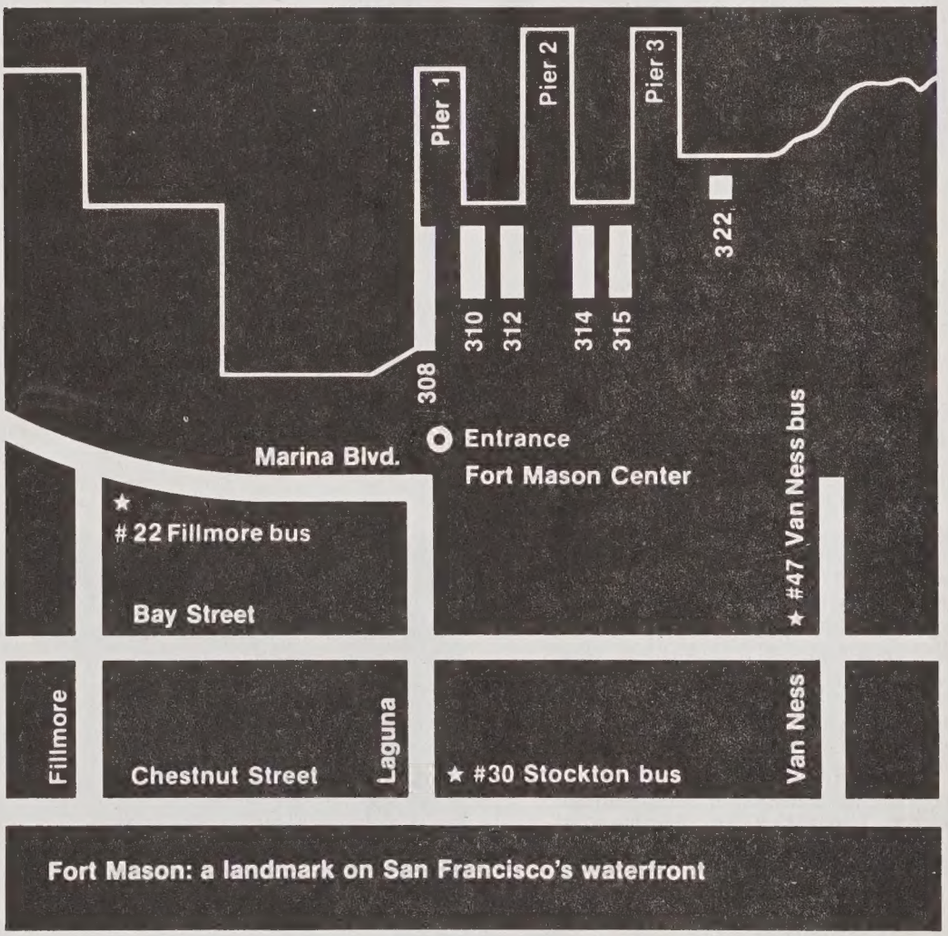
On The Waterfront

In July the Fort Mason Foundation assumes responsibility for what is potentially one of the most valuable structures in the entire complex of buildings at Fort Mason: Building 308. Once the base dispensary, more recently a Department of Agriculture storehouse, this long, single-story, high-ceiling structure stands just inside the front gate of Fort Mason Center and directly next to the sailboat mooring at Gashouse Cove. From its 375' west wall of windows, Building 308 offers spectacular views, through a copse of masts and spars, of the Marina Green, Golden Gate and the Marin Headlands—a sumptuous visual introduction to the whole of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. On its east side is a parking lot with room for several hundred cars.

After repairs and alterations are completed, the Fort Mason Foundation will re-locate its offices into Building 308, then begin conversion of other spaces into a new visitors' center for the pier area, a multi-purpose performance/conference facility, an art gallery and—in response to the increasing need for food service at the Center—a restaurant. Because of its unique, picturesque and convenient location, this wharf-side building could very quickly become one of the finest public cultural facilities in San Francisco as well as the only one of its kind anywhere on the city's waterfront.

Building 308 looking "through a copse of masts and spars" to the Golden Gate

Built for war, the piers and warehouses at Fort Mason are now watched over by Bufano's Madonna-like sculpture *Peace*—apt, ironic witness to the transformation of an historic Army post.



Fort Mason: a landmark on San Francisco's waterfront

Big Broadcast Of 1978

This July Fort Mason Center becomes the new home of Western Public Radio, a non-profit radio production and training service that focuses on cultural trends, scientific developments, industry and politics in the San Francisco Bay Area, California and other Western states.

Western Public Radio fills a need created by the demise of the Regional Bureau of National Public Radio. It is, according to its founder and director Leo C. Lee, "dedicated to presenting professionally produced programs and to providing training, experimentation and opportunities for people who want to work in radio".

100 persons a year will receive instruction and supervision at Western Public Radio, and its facilities are to be arranged so that park visitors can watch and listen as programs are being made—interviews with note-worthy people, for example, or programs on topical subjects such as the Town Hall Meetings produced at Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Western Public Radio is the recipient of a grant from the California Council on the Humanities in Public Policy to examine the impact on California in the '80s of the rapid growth of the State's Spanish-speaking population. And other documentaries in preparation include a study of media exploitation of violence against women and a look at the changing patterns of lifestyle in California's Chinese-American community.

Programs of Western Public Radio will be distributed nationally and internationally through such networks as National Public Radio, the British and Canadian Broadcasting Companies. The Fort Mason Foundation welcomes this new residency and shares in the enthusiasm of Leo Lee and others connected with Western Public Radio at the unique public service that is gained by their participation at Fort Mason Center.

Broadcast journalism in progress at Western Public Radio

Pacific States Crafts Fair '78

Potters, weavers, jewelers, metalsmiths; workers in wood, glass and leather—all these and more, adding up to three hundred of the country's finest craftspeople—will converge on Fort Mason Center's Pier II, August 10-13, for the 1978 Pacific States Crafts Fair.

Co-sponsored by the American Crafts Council, the Fort Mason Foundation and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, this annual juried exhibit and marketplace brings together artists from the Western United States and spectators from across the country in a festival setting overlooking San Francisco Bay.

This year, members of several California craft guilds will demonstrate their skills, allowing the expected 50,000 fairgoers the opportunity to stroll along an outdoor concourse and watch actual work in progress. The Fair will also feature a Children's Workshop and booths serving a variety of plain and fancy food.

Interested observer at the Pacific States Crafts Fair

First NEA Grant Funds Folk Festival

The Fort Mason Foundation has received its first grant from the National Endowment for the Arts—a $12,100 cash award with which to present the Western Regional Folk Festival in the Marin Headlands this October.

Earmarked to pay performers' fees and for the services of a folklorist/director, the NEA funding will be matched by in-kind contributions from the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, co-sponsor of the Festival.

With this NEA support, it is possible once again to conduct the Festival as a 3-day event. The setting will be the large natural amphitheater at Fort Barry, where three separate performing areas will feature continuous folk music and dance.

In a letter to the Foundation, Congressman John Burton expressed his pleasure at learning of the award and congratulated the Foundation for its role in making possible another staging of this highly popular event.

Meadow at Fort Barry in the Marin Headlands, where thousands will gather for this year's Western Regional Folk Festival

The Importance Of Being Friendly

Last September, the Fort Mason Foundation undertook a Friends of Fort Mason membership campaign aimed at establishing an ongoing support group of individual and corporate contributors. A Charter Committee, co-chaired by Emmett G. Solomon and Mrs. Richard P. Cooley, was organized to lead the drive and to help generate the sort of favorable response from philanthropists and philanthropic organizations that Fort Mason Center needs and so clearly deserves. As this newsletter goes to press, over 250 members have been brought into the fold.

Many of you reading this are already Friends of Fort Mason, and for that we thank you. For those of you who haven't yet joined, there is no better time than now.

As a Friend of Fort Mason, your tax-deductible contribution entitles you to annual subscriptions to both our monthly calendar and this quarterly newsletter, invitations to art show openings and discounts at selected events sponsored by the Fort Mason Foundation. Friends who are Sponsors, Patrons or Benefactors will be invited to additional special events.

But, most importantly, as a Friend of Fort Mason, you'll be an essential partner in creating and maintaining Fort Mason Center, an innovative new showcase for the rich cultural diversity of the San Francisco Bay Area, an important resource to resident and visitor alike.

If you are not a Friend, join today. If you are a Friend, please pass the coupon below on to someone new. We need all the Friends we can get.

Community and cultural endeavors are effective in relation to the degree that business people in the community commit their leadership—such sentiments are amply borne out by Friends of Fort Mason Co-Chairman Emmett G. Solomon (above), banker, philanthropist, religious leader and one of Fort Mason Foundation's oldest "friends". "I believe in this project," says Mr. Solomon. "I'm involved to help it get the support it needs and deserves."

From the arts of war . . . to the arts and crafts of peace: inside Pier II at the Pacific States Crafts Fair

Volunteers Wanted

A number of important and challenging volunteer positions are available at Fort Mason Center. Each position requires energy and dedication; each position offers the opportunity to be a key element in this unique and innovative project.

We need a coordinator for our new visitor's center, an aide to the program staff, a community liaison person to help generate new programs, a photographer to provide ongoing documentation on the Fort Mason project, and an offset press operator for our new printing center.

We also need full- and part- time volunteers to assist the office manager and staff with receptionist duties, typing, xeroxing and the coordination of mailings.

Anyone interested in becoming a Fort Mason volunteer, please contact Donna Sweeney at the Fort Mason Foundation, 441-5705.

**I support FORT MASON CENTER.
Enroll me as a member of the
FRIENDS OF FORT MASON.**

- ☐ **Family** ..... $ 25.00
- ☐ **Individual** 15.00
- ☐ **Student/Senior Citizen** 7.50
- ☐ **Sponsor** 100.00
- ☐ **Patron** 500.00
- ☐ **Benefactor** 1,000.00
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Checks payable to Fort Mason Foundation.
All memberships and contributions are tax-deductible.

Please clip and mail with check to:
Fort Mason Foundation, Building 310, Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA 94123.

Somewhere In The Golden Gate National Recreation Area: (above) Sausalito's Snake Theatre in performance of their critically-acclaimed theater piece,

***Somewhere In The Pacific,* on the beach at Fort Cronkhite; (below) one moment in the dramatic launch and unveiling of Robert Ellison's monumental sculpture, *Four Times Daily,* in the Bay off Fort Mason's Pier III.**

Photo Credits.

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